



Destination, creation and inclusion

A draft arts strategy for Hammersmith & Fulham

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1. What do we want to achieve ?

Hammersmith and Fulham is home to a vibrant arts and culture scene. But we are now trying to make it even better.

- A more popular destination in which greater creativity thrives and the arts are enjoyed by more people from a wider range of backgrounds.
- A place where residents more clearly drive how the council supports the arts and where every penny of arts funding is even more focused than now.
- A borough where the arts are at the centre of a dynamic local economy, leading to new jobs and businesses.

This draft strategy sets out our approach for achieving these aims, grouped under three core themes: **destination**, **creation** and **access**. The purpose of the strategy is to set out the big picture and the broad nature of our approach rather than provide an exhaustive analysis of every type of arts activity.

Destination

We want to enhance the contribution of arts to the local community and economy by developing Hammersmith & Fulham as a thriving borough for the arts and promoting it as a creative and exciting place to live in, do business in and visit from within London, across the UK and overseas.

Creation

We want to enhance the experience of living and working in the borough and boost the local economy by stimulating artistic achievement and supporting adults, children and young people from a wide range of backgrounds to create, produce and perform excellent art of all kinds.

Inclusion

We want to ensure that residents from diverse backgrounds get more opportunity to enjoy and participate in a variety of types of art which challenges and inspires them and promotes their health and wellbeing.

The success of our actions will depend on **partnership** and **focus**.

Partnership

We want the council's efforts to support the arts to be clearly driven by residents. This will mean finding the best ways of working with residents, arts organisations and local businesses to develop and implement a common vision for the arts in the borough.

Focus

We want to be sure that anything the council does to support the arts – including any funding in these tough economic times – clearly relates to our core themes.

In the next section, we set out where the borough currently is. In the following sections, we then set out some ideas for how we can build Hammersmith & Fulham as an arts destination, stimulate local artistic achievement and ensure that the arts are for everyone.

The **consultation** on this draft strategy will run from 8 November 2015 to 31 January 2016. Please see section 6 below for how you can give us your views.

2. Where are we now?

We already have a thriving arts scene in Hammersmith & Fulham in many ways. We are home to a number of large and prestigious arts organisations with national and international reputations, and we house a vibrant, diverse population of small organisations and artistic activity.

The dynamism of local art activity beyond our high profile organisations is evidenced by the success of this year's HF ArtsFest, in which 360 artists from across the borough offered 120 events representing all art forms, including music, theatre, visual art, literature, performance art and film. **Appendix A** gives a snapshot of the activities, individuals and groups involved.

A number of these artists and organisations receive some council funding. **Appendix B** indicates the range and location of what we supported last year.

Festivals

With support from the council, residents are already in the driving seat of two wide-ranging festivals that showcase the arts in the borough.

Now in only its second year, the **HF ArtsFest** week in June has established itself as a key happening for residents and the arts community. It promotes what is already being produced and organises bespoke events. Meanwhile, the **Celebrating Fulham** in June-July promotes Fulham's history, culture and attractions and encourages residents to spend with local businesses.

Theatre

The borough has a strong offering of theatre performance and development. The recently extended **Lyric Theatre** draws audiences from across London and beyond and the **Bush Theatre** has a national reputation for new plays and championing playwrights, while the **London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art (LAMDA)** is an international centre for drama training. The **Barons Court Theatre** offers an intimate fringe venue. The **Riverside Studios** arts hub is expected to reopen in spring 2018.

Music

The borough has three well-known music venues: the **Bush Hall**, **O2 Shepherds Bush Empire** and **Eventim Apollo**. These host live music and events and attract audiences from far afield. However, the borough does not have a dedicated concert hall.

Visual arts

The **Association for Cultural Advancement through Visual Art (ACAVA)** provides visual arts facilities, the **Society of Fulham Artists and Potters** exhibits local artists and **Artists at Home** opens up the studios of local artists and craft-workers in mid-June. Through the adult learning classes run by the council, hundreds of residents create arts and crafts every year.

However, Hammersmith & Fulham does not have a significant, dedicated art gallery. Although the borough owns a valuable collection of Pre-Raphaelite paintings, known as the **Cecil French Bequest**, this is currently in storage and not on display.

Museums

The **Museum of Fulham Palace** displays the historic home of the Bishops of London, while **Kelmscott House Museum** is the home of arts and crafts pioneer William Morris.

Cultural centres

The **Bhavan Centre**, the **Polish Social and Cultural Association Ltd (POSK)** and the **Irish Cultural Centre** promote a wide variety of respectively Indian, Polish and Irish culture and art.

3. Destination – Making the borough a national and international beacon for the arts

We want to enhance the contribution of arts to the local community and economy by developing Hammersmith & Fulham as a thriving borough for the arts and promoting it as a creative and exciting place to live in and visit.

The council is developing a strategy for regeneration and economic growth. This seeks to support local firms, boost the borough's economy, increase residents' economic activity and ensure we have the business rates income we need to help us fund services in the face of government cuts.

It also aims to enhance the borough as an interesting, exciting and stimulating place to live and work, with artistic and cultural activity playing a central role in this approach.

These aims are interrelated.

In one strand of activity, the council aims to develop the borough as one of the leading destinations for arts activity, building on and adding to the high profile and well regarded arts organisations already located in Hammersmith and Fulham.

This will involve:

- Seeking to develop new significant arts attractions – art galleries or a concert hall might be examples – which boost the national and international profile of the borough as an arts destination;
- Attracting high profile and internationally acclaimed arts performers and attractions to the borough, be they orchestras, art exhibitions or opera companies; and
- Supporting and stimulating the dynamic diversity of smaller arts activities that form an integral part of developing the Borough as a beacon for the arts.

In the other strand, the council aims to put arts at the centre of its strategies for achieving more employment, apprenticeship and contracting opportunities for local residents and businesses in the arts, entertainment, leisure, media and creative industries. We plan to do this by growing the number of visitors, using land development opportunities wisely and supporting the growth of strong clusters of firms across the broad creative industries.

We start from a good position. In 2012, 8,653 people were employed in the arts, entertainment and leisure industries in Hammersmith & Fulham. At 6.8%, this is a higher share of the workforce than in London as a whole (5.1%) or England (4.4%)¹. Earls Court and White City – where the BBC is continuing to maintain an important presence – have a legacy of arts and entertainment which can be built on.

What will we do?

- The borough lacks some significant major arts venues, including a concert hall and major art galleries. We will seek in particular through our land development and regeneration strategies to support the location and establishment of new major arts venues that will attract visitors to the borough and boost the local economy.
- We will develop a long-term plan for the borough's own art collection - the Cecil French Bequest. This includes restoring the collection and fundraising to find a permanent home for its display in the borough.
- New arts facilities should be sought as part of the major regeneration taking place across the borough, particularly in the specific major regeneration areas². This includes artistic spaces, office for arts-related businesses and accommodation for small and medium-sized arts organisations as well as large ones. We will work with developers to maximise opportunities to build art into new developments, and also to make use of temporary arts spaces in, for example, buildings earmarked for redevelopment.

¹ Office for National Statistics, 2012

² These are Old Oak, White City, Hammersmith Town Centre and Riverside, Earls Court and West Kensington, and South Fulham Riverside.

- We will seek to ensure that both the Earls Court and Old Oak Common regeneration areas secure high quality, internationally recognised cultural venues as part of their schemes.
- We will actively seek to support our high profile large arts venues in attracting major national and international arts attractions; and we will also encourage a wide range of art fairs and exhibitions into the borough.
- In strategic discussions with national organisations, we will advocate on behalf of arts groups in Hammersmith & Fulham and lobby to attract support and external funding for arts initiatives in the borough.
- We will seek to work with local educational institutions, businesses and public organisations to maximise the employment opportunities for local people in the arts and creative industries.
- We will use our social media and communication channels to raise awareness of existing artistic and cultural activities.
- We will keep the council's webpages on the arts up to date and use these to promote the breadth of activity happening in the borough.
- We will explore using street-level signposts to highlight local attractions and the possibility of developing this into a smartphone app.

4. Creation – Stimulating local artistic achievement

We want to enhance the experience of living and working in the borough and boost the local economy by stimulating artistic achievement and supporting people from a wide range of backgrounds to create and produce excellent art of all kinds.

There is a thriving arts scene in Hammersmith & Fulham, with many nationally recognised organisations as well as individuals producing high quality art.

We want to make it easier for individual artists to find space to develop, create and perform excellent art. We also want to help them find customers and audiences. As regards larger arts organisations, we want to support existing ones to achieve greater artistic creativity and we want to attract new ones to the borough.

The focus must be on artistic excellence. We will also want to pay particular attention to artists, organisations and businesses who encourage audiences and users to expand their horizons and explore new ideas

What will we do?

- We will facilitate a network for local artists and people interested in the arts in the borough. This will disseminate information about what's on, share best practice and advice and promote arts activity.
- We will encourage pop-up art galleries for local artists to exhibit and sell their work by providing contacts and advice on how to use empty buildings for this activity.
- We will work with land owners and developers to provide access to affordable studio space.
- We will disseminate information on funding streams for the arts.
- We will promote the borough's creative industries to raise their profile, and work to attract new and industry-leading firms to the Borough.
- We will establish a forum where businesses and artists can come together to arrange the loan or purchase of art for display in offices.
- We will establish a panel of borough artists, creative professionals and creative industry experts to advise on the joined-up delivery of the arts strategy.
- We will appoint an arts officer to provide support, advice and act as an enabler and facilitator between arts organisations.
- We will become an active member of the London Councils Arts & Culture Forum³.
- We will work with commercial partners to enable an artist in residence scheme at the council.

5. Inclusion – Arts for everyone

We want to ensure that residents from a wide range of backgrounds get more opportunity to enjoy and participate in a variety of art which challenges and inspires them and promotes their health and wellbeing.

There are many opportunities for residents to enjoy, create and perform high quality art in the borough. At our well-attended adult learning classes, residents study a range of arts and crafts from creating stained glass windows to comic book

³ This brings together officers from all London councils' cultural services and representatives from Arts Council England, the Greater London Authority, London Councils and London & Partners to develop and promote local arts and cultural provision, share information and good practice, identify areas for collaboration, support advocacy for local arts and culture services, and embed arts and culture in the wider agenda.

illustration. We also run a programme for learners with learning disabilities, including classes and workshops with the Amici Dance Theatre Company.

However, we know that numerous residents do not access the arts for a variety of reasons, including cultural and financial.

We want to ensure that all residents have opportunities to access the arts. In particular, we want to expand young people's horizons and stimulate their imagination, ambition and sense of the possible by giving them exposure to forms of art they would otherwise be unlikely to access.

We also want to support the vast range of grassroots (or community-led) performing arts, music and dance clubs active across our borough. These groups help make arts accessible to residents from all backgrounds.

And we want to ensure that more people are able to benefit from the therapeutic effect of the arts on health, wellbeing and social inclusion. People who participate in the arts as audience members are likely to report good health, saving the public purse money⁴.

What will we do?

- We will use art as a way of engaging with younger people to expand their horizons and their ambitions.
- We will promote and support projects that encourage the participation of children and young people in arts activities.
- We will use art as a way of engaging with older people to improve their health and wellbeing.
- We will seek to expand apprenticeships within creative organisations in the borough by offering support and information.
- We will work with healthcare providers to promote the positive effects of participating in arts activity on health and wellbeing.
- HF ArtsFest is an extraordinary achievement by a dedicated group of residents that brings the arts right into and across our community. We will support it to develop and grow further so it can become financially sustainable.
- We will promote the value of volunteering in the arts.

⁴ For example, saving up to £168.8m a year in reduced GP visits and a further £227.8m in reduced use of mental health services. Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) strategic research programme, 2015

- With a range of private, public and third sector partners we will develop a plan for tackling barriers, including financial ones, to accessing high quality art.
- We will encourage more artistic businesses in the borough to provide greater access, for example by emulating the Lyric Theatre's free first night tickets⁵.
- We will provide access to the Cecil French Bequest by taking high resolution pictures of the collection and making these available on the council's website and to schools and colleges.
- We will ensure that we consider inclusion in everything we fund.
- We will support programmes and projects that encourage the participation of socially excluded groups in the arts.
- We will provide free exhibition space in the glass box outside the Town Hall to local artists.
- We will include artistic elements in the borough's events such as fireworks and Playday and work with Hammersmith BID to make greater use of the big screen in Lyric Square.
- We will promote the art available to view at the Imperial College Healthcare Hospitals.
- We will make increased use of our libraries as cultural spaces for exhibitions, performances and creativity across a wide range of art forms. We will look to gain funding and support from Arts Council England for this and to enhance the libraries' role as a place for local residents and artists to engage with each other.
- We will work with the borough's Youth Council to ensure this strategy is relevant to young people.
- We will encourage schools and local organisations to attain standards such as the Arts Council's 'Arts Mark' and other arts awards.

6. What do you think?

We would very much welcome your views on the strategy – both on the strategy as a whole and particular aspects.

⁵ People who live or work in Hammersmith & Fulham can get two free tickets per household to the first night of all main house Lyric productions. Tickets are given away on the Friday and Saturday before the first performance.

Consultation on the strategy will run from 8 November 2015 to 31 January 2016. This will range from public meetings to written comments and contributions from individuals and organisations.

If you would like to write to us, it would be helpful if you could address the four questions below but feel free to range more widely.

- (1) Are our priorities the right ones?**
- (2) Which of the ideas here do you think most worth exploring?**
- (3) What have we missed?**
- (4) How do you want to work with us?**
- (5) How should we measure our success?**

Please could you head your comments “**Arts strategy consultation**” and send them by 31 January 2016 either by **email** to Arts@lbhf.gov.uk or by **post** to Donna Pentelow, Head of Culture, Hammersmith Town Hall, King Street, London W6 9JU.

Appendix A: Snapshot of HF ArtsFest activities and participants

- Hepsibah Gallery
- Sam Deards Photography Exhibition
- Lisa Norris Gallery
- Angelica Spranger Fine Art Photography
- National Army Museum
- Masbro Centre's Art Experience
- The Gate
- Hammersmith United Charities exhibition
- Jack Jones Poetry Trail
- Bush Theatre
- Lyric Hammersmith
- Bush Baby Orchestra
- The Stories of Science at Blythe House
- Children's Art Club at Shepherd's Bush Library
- Singing for Breathing at John Bett's House
- Poetry Event at Askew Road Library
- An Evening at LAMDA
- Justin Nozuka
- V&A's Clothworkers' Centre at Blythe House
- Watercolour Taster at Fulham Palace
- Science Museum Artefacts Tour
- Lux Lisbon Band
- Nomad Books Story Time
- Paperbirds Art & Craft Club
- The Family Rain Band
- West London Link Design Exhibition
- William Morris Society & Museum
- Hammersmith United Charities Photographic Exhibition
- Lovin' Daniel A New Irish Community Play
- All Saints Church Choir - Choral and Cabaret
- POSK Jazz Café - Emily Saunders
- Dukes of Havoc Band
- A House of Many Sides - a tour of Blythe House
- Fulham Camerata Choir
- W11 Opera
- BushStock 2015
- Glen Aitken at the Durell
- Ravenscourt Park Glasshouse Exhibition
- W6 Triennial site-specific 5M²
- The Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery
- The Road To Knock Film Screening
- Baka Beyond
- Hetley Road Open Studios

Appendix B: What the council funds

- **Albert & Friends Instant Circus** – Located in Hammersmith, Albert & Friends Instant Circus (A&FIC) exists to develop the physical and creative potential of children and young people using circus and the physical arts.
- **ArtWest Open Studios** – ArtWest is a collective of artists in West London, who all open their studios to the public one weekend in the autumn.
- **Taxi Pata Pata** – Based in Shepherds Bush, support the Congolese community, and offer African Arts & Music projects.
- **Addison Singers** – Comprise of two classical choirs and two jazz choirs. It also offers three different singing classes to meet the needs of beginners, intermediate and the more competent, experienced singer.
- **Irish Cultural Centre** - Established since 1995, the centre is acclaimed for providing one of the most exciting and adventurous weekly programmes in the UK, featuring Ireland's best traditional and contemporary musicians, an Irish film programme, Irish literary events, Theatre and art exhibitions.
- **Amici Dance Company** – Established 35 years, Amici is a unique dance theatre company integrating able-bodied & disabled artists and performers.
- **HF Arts Festival** – community led festival promoting and celebrating the cultural richness in the borough.
- **Fulham Opera** - One of the UK's premier independent professional companies, Fulham Opera exists to produce large scale works in the intimate space of St. John's Church, Fulham.
- **Music 'all** - Music'all is a not-for-profit, extra-curricular music school based in Parsons Green for children age 4-18, from beginner to advanced level.
- **Lyric Hammersmith** - The Lyric Hammersmith aims to produce work that is provoking, entertaining, popular, eclectic, messy, contradictory and diverse.
- **William Morris Society** - The William Morris Society, based at Kelmscott House, aims to perpetuate the memory of one of the greatest men of the Victorian, or any, age.

